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SIPDIS

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STATE FOR AF/SPG, PRM, AND ALSO PASS USAID/W
USAID FOR DCHA SUDAN TEAM, DCHA/OFDA, AND AFR/SP
NAIROBI FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA, USAID/REDSO, USAID/SFO AND FAS
GENEVA FOR NKYLOH
NSC FOR PMARCHAM, MMAGAN, AND TSHORTLEY
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
USUN FOR TMALY
BRUSSELS FOR PBROWN

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SUDAN - USAID FLOOD ASSESSMENT RENK COUNTY, UPPER NILE
STATE

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11. Summary. From August 28 to 30, USAID/OFDA staff visited Renk County in northern Upper Nile State, Southern Sudan, to assess the effects of recent flooding. Flooding caused severe damage to homes and livestock and affected an estimated 10,000 households, or approximately 50,000 people. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UN agencies have played a key role in stabilizing the situation by providing emergency food and relief commodities, in addition to establishing three temporary internally displaced person (IDP) camps to accommodate more than 900 displaced families. However, with the continuation of the rainy season through mid-October, the potential for additional flooding remains. End summary.

FLOOD ASSESSMENT

12. In mid-July, flooding along the Asheer River resulted in severe damage to houses, crops, and livestock in Renk, Jelhak, Shimodi, and Gaiger payams of Renk County in northern Upper Nile State. According to county officials and the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SRRC), flooding has affected 10,000 households, or approximately 50,000 people, including 2,000 households, or approximately 10,000 people, in Renk town. In Shimodi payam, 72 houses and 11 shops were destroyed. In Jelhak payam, flooding affected 1,500 people, collapsed 700 houses, and resulted in the loss of 500 livestock. In Gaiger payam, officials report that 1,675 households, or approximately 8,375 people, were affected and 183 livestock lost. In Jalhak and Gaiger payams, local officials expressed concern over significant damage to the agricultural sector, including the loss of recently planted sorghum fields. In other areas, high water levels have temporarily made agricultural land inaccessible to farmers and flooded crops, raising food security concerns.

13. Immediately following the flooding, a joint assessment team comprised of members of the European Union-funded NGO consortium based in Renk, the county environmental health department, and the executive administrator's office conducted a rapid assessment. This was followed by an interagency assessment, including the UN World Food Program (WFP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), World Vision, and SRRC. Assessments noted significant flooding in Renk town, particularly in blocks 10

and 12, and a significant deterioration in the quality of drinking water as a result of disruptions to the fuel supply.

¶4. In all flood-affected areas, officials are concerned that health and nutrition conditions will further deteriorate as a result of stagnant and standing water and the accompanying increased risk of waterborne diseases. In some health centers in Jelhak town, there is a serious shortage of medicine to treat the prevalence of malaria, skin diseases, and respiratory infections due to the absence of a functioning system to replenish drug supplies from Juba or Khartoum. The shortage has prompted a dramatic increase in prices.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

¶5. NGOs and UN agencies have played a key role in stabilizing the situation by providing emergency food and relief commodities, in addition to establishing three temporary IDP camps. As the lead agency of the Renk County NGO consortium, Mercy Corps has been instrumental in supporting local government and UN flood response, particularly in the absence of a permanent UN presence in the county.

¶6. NGOs and UN agencies have established three temporary IDP camps to accommodate more than 900 displaced families. Other displaced households are sheltering with relatives and friends. Humanitarian agencies are providing health, emergency relief commodity, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene services to camp populations. UNICEF has provided two water purification units installed by Medair, 270 kilograms of chlorine to treat water sources, and 1,500 emergency relief commodity kits, including plastic sheeting. In collaboration with Mercy Corps and a local community-based organization, Mubadiroon, UNICEF has also established two medical units. Mercy Corps and Medair have jointly constructed 72 pit latrines and initiated a health education and environmental sanitation awareness campaign. In addition, UNHCR, World Vision,

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and Medair have provided relief commodities, including plastic sheeting and mosquito nets.

¶7. In Renk town, Mercy Corps and the local government have prepared 4,100 meters of trenches to drain accumulated water, helping to minimize damage. The local government provided engineering services, supplemented by a cash-for-work program implemented by Mercy Corps and funded through Christian Aid.

¶8. Throughout flood-affected areas of Renk County, government and humanitarian agencies are providing assistance. The Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) has provided USD 25,000 to assist in the local transport and distribution of relief supplies and 340 tents. Local authorities have also provided 100 tents, 100 plastic sheets, fifty 90 kilogram bags of sorghum, and USD 7,500 for transportation costs. WFP has provided a 15-day food ration for 1,411 households, and has agreed to provide an additional three-month food-for-recovery ration through Mercy Corps. Local NGOs funded through Khartoum-based assistance campaigns have also provided assistance, although details are not available.

LOOKING FORWARD

¶9. USAID staff report that despite current response efforts, gaps remain. Priorities identified by local communities and county officials include medicine, shelter materials, mosquito nets, blankets, stagnant water treatment, and land allocation for the resettlement of affected households. Government and humanitarian agencies are engaging in dialogue with flood-affected communities on future settlement plans. There is a strong consensus that the allocation of new land is required for the resettlement of displaced populations. However, building the necessary infrastructure and essential services represents a significant challenge and a potential obstacle to local authorities' plans to dismantle

temporary IDP camps by mid-October. Local government has also expressed an interest in establishing food-for-work programs to assist flood-affected households to rebuild livelihoods.

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